

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the specification, the paragraph numbered [0078] has been amended as suggested by the Examiner to incorporate the ranges recited in claims 16-18.

Claims 1, 2, 14-18 and 26-29 remain in this application. Claims 1 and 26-29 have been amended. Claim 5 has been cancelled. Claims 3, 4, 10-13, and 19-25 have been withdrawn, and claim 26 has been amended, as a result of an earlier restriction requirement. In view of the Examiner's earlier restriction requirement, applicant retains the right to present claims 3, 4, 10-13, and 19-25 and claim 26 as originally submitted (or an appropriate derivative thereof) in a divisional application.

1. Section 112

The Examiner has rejected claims 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as unsupported by the specification. Claims 28 and 29 have been amended herein to reflect a pressure value finding specific support in paragraph [0089] of the specification as originally filed. No new matter is believed to be included by the amendments.

2. Double Patenting

The Examiner has provisionally rejected claims 1, 2, 5 – 9, 14 – 18, and 26 – 29 on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 – 17 of co-pending application no. 11/016,093.

The Examiner has also provisionally rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 16 – 18, and 26 – 29 on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 – 13 of co-pending application no. 11/016,645.

The Examiner has also provisionally rejected claims 7 – 9, 14 and 15 on the grounds of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 – 13 of co-pending application no. 11/016,645.

The provisional rejections are noted and will be addressed at such time as they become non-provisional.

3. Section 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 5 – 9, 14 – 18, and 26 – 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obviousness over Tonkovichm, et al(WO 01/12312) in view of Burdon, et al (WO 00/21659).

The Examiner has also rejected claims 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Tonkovich, et al(WO 00/21659) in view of Burdon, et al (WO 00/21659), further in view of Haas-Santo, et al (*Preparation of microstructure compatible porous supports by sol-gel synthesis for catalyst coatings*).

Claim 1 has been amended herein to recite in part:

a plurality of microchannel walls defining at least one microchannel for accommodating chemicals to be processed, at least one coating layer adhered to the plurality of microchannel walls defining said at least one microchannel, the coating layer including a catalyst support and a catalyst, wherein the plurality of microchannel walls comprise a frit of a material selected from the group consisting of glass and glass-ceramic, and combinations thereof, and wherein at least one of the plurality of microchannel walls further comprises a porous membrane.

The amended claim 1 corresponds to former claim 5, which has been cancelled herein. Combination of the references of record does not teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claim 1 as amended. In particular, although Tonkovich et al. does disclose a wall that comprises a porous membrane as noted by the Examiner (at page 18, lines 4-12; and Fig. 10d of Tonkovich), Tonkovich does not disclose said wall having at least one coating layer adhered to it, the coating layer comprising a catalyst support and a catalyst, as recited in the claim as amended. Combining the teachings of Burdon and/or Hass-Santo with that of Tonkovich would still not result in the wall comprising a porous membrane also having a coating layer adhered thereto as recited in the claim. For this reason at least, claim 1 as amended is believed to be allowable over the art of record.

Claim 26 has been amended similarly to claim 1, and all claims presently remaining in the case depend from either claim 1 or claim 26. Accordingly, all claims are believed to be allowable over the art of record.

Appl No.: 10/696052
Response dated: March 25, 2009
Office Action dated: September 25, 2008

Applicant believes that a three-month extension of time is necessary to make this Reply timely, and a request for such is submitted herewith. Should applicant be in error, applicant respectfully requests that the Office grant such time extension pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) as necessary to make this Reply timely, and hereby authorizes the Office to charge any necessary fee or surcharge with respect to said time extension to the deposit account of the undersigned firm of attorneys, Deposit Account 03-3325.

Please direct any questions or comments to Gregory V. Bean at 607-974-2698.

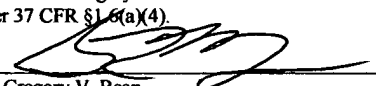
Respectfully submitted,

DATE:

25 Mar 09



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